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AUTHOR Kelley, Colleen E.
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ABSTRACT

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BAD MEN 'SPEAKING' WELL: A CASE STUDY OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ETHICS

by

Dr. Colleen E. Kelley

Division of Humanities and Social Sciences
Pennsylvania State University at Erie
The Behrend College
Erie, Pennsylvania 16563

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ABSTRACT

This essay examines some of the campaign communication behavior during the 1988 presidential race in terms of ethical criteria for a participatory democracy. Overall, the campaign violated several standards for ethical behavior through strategies such as over-reliance on emotional appeals, ridicule, failure to focus on relevant issues and avoidance of debate. The Atwater/Ailes/Bush team is treated as a paradigm case and the conclusions are presented as applicable to Democrats and Republicans alike. The paper concludes with a discussion of the future of participatory democracy in the United States in light of recent campaign communication strategies.

> To say and do that which best serves the public good is difficult indeed, especially under the pressures of a campaign (Windes, p. 6).

> This campaign is getting real exciting. Only about a month to go and still nobody knows whether the American people will choose Lee Atwater or John Sasso (Rosenthal, "The Manipulators").

Whenever people talk to one another, ethics become important both to the development of individuals and to society. Every act of speech is a social act of influence and so every act of speech involves ethical responsibility (Windes, p. 17). Gouran believes that judging this ethical responsibility , in part, depends on the context in which the evaluated behavior is occurring (p.21).

This essay examines communication strategies within the context of a political campaign, focusing particularly on those methods used by George Bush's Republican team. Johannesen believes that a political system usually contains within its ideology a set of values and procedures accepted as crucial to the health and growth of that governmental system. Ethical communication is that which fosters these values and unethical communication is that which retards, subverts or circumvents these values (p. II). Some of the most frequently employed techniques of the Republican campaign election staff are examined using criteria for ethical communication in a democracy particularly relevant to campaigning.

The paper begins with a brief discussion of ethics and speech communication focusing on political communication. An explanation of the decision to examine "handler" strategies rather than candidates' specific rhetoric is offered followed by an examination of Campaign '88 rhetoric . The essay concludes with a discussion and consideration of some possible effects of such communication behavior on a participatory democracy.

Ethics and Communication

The communication and ethics symbiosis has been recognized since the classical period in rhetorical theory. Golden, Berquist and Coleman write in The Rhetoric of Western Thought of Plato's

observation that rhetoric's purpose was to "make the will of God known"; that Aristotle considered ethics one of rhetoric's major subject areas and that "one of the functions of rhetoric was to make truth and justice prevail." Finally, they refer to Quintilian, one of "the definitive summarizers of classical theory", and his thesis that "an orator is a good man skilled in speaking" (pp. 4-5). Since communication is the tool by which we both form and are formed by others (Dowling and Marraro, p. 350) the tradition of considering rhetoric as an ethically based art is carried on through contemporary communication theory to "avoid the worst of sophism" (Arnett, p. 14).

Criteria for determining ethical communication within a political context may be determined by the values of a government (Denton, p. 2). It follows that to assess ethical behavior within a democracy, communication should foster the realization of what is valuable in that system. Unethical communication would distort, restrain or hinder those values. A democratic perspective for ethical communciation is based upon the values inherent within democratic government. According to Day, the democratic ethics of public address are inherent in its function as the decision making mechanism for a democratic society (p.12).

There are several ethical communication systems available to those engaged in political communication in a democracy. For example, Wallace isolates four values basic to a healthy democracy: a belief in the worth of the individual, fairness, freedom with responsibility and a belief in each person's ability to grasp the nature of democracy. Communication implementing these values includes free speech, informed decision making and access to diverse public channels (cited in Johannesen, pp. 11-12). Other political communication ethical guidelines are offered by Nilsen. Included in his criteria are providing adequate information as well as diverse views and knowledge of alternative choices and their possible outcomes. Communication must also employ fair and civil language to facilitate free expression and constructive criticism (The Ethics of Speech Communication). Verba and Nie identify the right to vote, speak up, challenge incumbent leadership and to associate freely with one's fellow citizens as communication guidelines in a democracy (p. 334). A structure for assessing the ethical content of political campaigning is offered by Hook. Specifics include being informed, criticizing policies initially and persons only when they are responsible for policies, refuting arguments before impugning motives and never participating in acts that would block discussion (cited

in Johannesen, p. 19). Nilsen also addresses campaign communication ethics as he highlights spurious behavior including emphasizing attack, eliminating debate and using a negative appeal illuminating issues neither real or significant to a campaign ("Free Speech..." p. 239). While the codes differ in specifics, in Anderson's view all of them share common features including condemnation of mispresentation, deceptive or misleading advertising, and negative attacks while stressing the use of press conferences, unrehearsed communication and responsive discussion of significant issues (p. 489).

Emphasis on image over substance and the use of "dirty tricks" in political campaign rhetoric is not new or likely to disappear from the American political scene. However, acts structured to intentionally misrepresent a political candidate's character or position are inappropriate and irresponsible (Gouran, p. 29) and subject to scrutiny. If such behavior warrants examination from an ethical standpoint, then it seems fitting to apply some of these ethical considerations to the rhetoric of Campaign '88, the "year of the handler" (Yepsen, p. I).

Germond and Witcover, in their retrospective of the 1988 presidential campaign, argue that the process of making decisions on nominees is virtually unrecognizable from that same process in 1960. They write that in 1988

> Politics had become mechanized and, inevitably, dehumanized. The difference now was that professional manipulation of public opinion had been substituted for leadership and advocacy. The consultants had become wizards of the business, specialists in manipulating the news media. They increasingly filled the void as surrogates for the candidate. The 'spin patrol'--the dispatching of campaign operatives to put the most self-serving interpretation on a candidate's words and actions--had become a standard phenomenon (pp. 49-51).

1988 may have been a touchstone year for the professionalism of political communication, a year when the "king makers" were "the new breed" of political and media consultant. No longer temporary additions to individual candidate's staffs, these "professional politicians" became permanent fixtures and "the link between electoral politics and campaigns, leaders and the public" (Denton, p.6). As a result, candidates no longer ran for office but became, Democrats and Republicans alike, "packaged" (Hart, p.

367). Two factors justify an appraisal of communication techniques used in presidential manufacturing: first, these strategies frequently violate standards for ethical communication in a democracy and second, these strategies appear to work.

What follows is an examination of some of the most obvious ethically questionable techniques from the campaign of George Bush in 1988. While the campaigns of both Bush and Dukakis were packaged, Dukakis' was a failure and Bush's was successful. It was successful, according to a post-election Gallop poll, essentially because of "Bush's assault" on Dukakis (cited in Germond and Witcover, p. 467). It was Roger Ailes, the Republican candidate's chief media consultant and Lee Atwater, campaign manager, "prime practitioner of attack politics" (Walsh, p. 31) and Bush surrogate in the "game of good cop/ bad cop" (Morganthau, p. 33) who "wargamed" (Germond and Witcover, p. 467) the presidential campaign of George Bush. And it is their campaigning which is examined as a paradigm of campaign '88 rhetorical behavior.

Selected Strategies

As early as 1981, Lee Atwater was using the phrase "permanent campaign" to describe his plans for mobilization of an ongoing political network (McLaughlin). With a principle theory, according to Borger, of robbing the other guy's base (p. 18) his principle technique was to attack and his goal to accentuate the negative and define Democrats better than they could define themselves (Walsh, p. 31). When Atwater used his "raw-meat rhetoric" the "concept of campaign as education exercise crumbled before the concept of campaign as warfare, and Dukakis was gunned down in the process" (Germond and Witcover, p. 69). Referred to as a "political Genghis Khan" (Apple) with a "well-developed reputation for political hardball" (Barnes, "Republican...", p. 20) "running a slash-and-burn" campaign (Yepson, p. 1) Reeves suggests of Atwater that in

> in every campaign he manages, rumors begin to pop up about mental illness, homosexuality, drugs, and the burning of American flags by opponents' wives (p. B1).

The seeds of the Atwater/Ailes negative campaign for 1988 were planted during the primaries. Two weeks before the California primary, several Bush staffers including Lee Atwater and Roger Ailes convened focus groups made up of Dukakis supporters. Bush was trailing Dukakis in the polls, some of

which indicated people did not like Bush's personality. News reports had ridiculed the vice-president as a "wimp" and he needed help quickly. His "negatives" were high.

Behind a two-way mirror, Atwater observed researchers informing the groups about revelations regarding Dukakis including his vetoes of legislation requiring Massachusetts' teachers to lead classes in the Pledge of Allegiance and that a black convict named Willie Horton, on an escape from Massachusetts' weekend prison-furlough program, had raped a Maryland woman and terrorized her fiance. By the end of the presentation, after half of the former Dukakis supporters had turned against him, Atwater recalled

> I realized that there we had the wherewithal to win. The sky was the limit on Dukakis' negatives (cited in McDonald, p. 32)

Roger Ailes reports his reactions to the focus groups:

> The Bush campaign had to define Dukakis in the worst possible terms by trumpeting his 'negatives' before the Dukakis campaign effectively did the same to Bush. It was all a matter of who hit first and who made it stick (cited in Germond and Witcover, p. 9).

The groups produced "issues" the Bush team would emphasize and continue to define until Election Day in a relentless attack against the Dukakis camp. This became one of the most successful and most ethically suspect behaviors of the campaign: Dukakis was so effectively assaulted that most of his rhetorical efforts were spent replying to or denying the Bush/Atwater accusations and as a result issues relevant to electing a president of the United States were rarely debated.

Two issues, the flag/Pledge of Allegiance and the case of Willie Horton, illustrate how the Republican staff skillfully utilized the negative issue technique. The Dukakis veto of the 1977 bill requiring teachers to recite the Pledge of Allegiance became the principal "negative" evidence of the Massachusetts' governor's record. Despite a feeble attempt at a legalistic defense of the veto, citing a State Supreme court ruling that the law was unconstitutional, Dukakis was soon caught "engaging Bush in a competition over which of them could produce more Star-Spangled Banners at his rallies" (Germond and Witcover, p. 11). Simon argues not only was this strategy a "shabby use of the flag" but that the flag was manipulated to shield the nondiscussion of real issues upon which a campaign should focus (p. 65). Ethically, the Atwater/Ailes plan had a sinister motive: Dukakis did not veto the bill because he disliked

the Pledge but because he was advised the bill itself was illegal. Thus, the "flag issue" became an innuendo issue, with Bush's people implying Dukakis was unpatriotic, but without saying it in so many words (Barnes, "Cheap...", p. 17).

The infamous and overwhelmingly effective Willie Horton revolving-prison-door ads were viewed by many as trying to use a black man to plant a fear of Michael Dukakis in whites (Hendrickson, DI) and raised allegations of racist overtones in Atwater's management of the 1988 Republican campaign (Shenon, "Howard...", Apple). One Dukakis staffer insisted there was "nothing innocent" about the Bush campaign's use of the Horton issue:

> There is no stronger metaphor for racial hatred in our country than the black man raping the white woman. If you were going to run a campaign of fear and smear and appeal to racial hatred you could not have picked a better case to use than this one.

Atwater, however, realized early that "the Horton case is one of those gut issues that are values issues, particularly in the South and if we hammer at these over and over, we are going to win" (Rosenthal, "Foes..." A1). Successful or not, the "crypto-racist" (Lamar, p. 27) allegations and charges that the ad was "put together by cynical merchants of political flesh who felt that a racist appeal without the racist label would work" (Simon, p. 154) remain.

The emphasis on such emotionally charged and ethically questionable campaign arguments resulted in a focus on the mechanics of politics rather than in the airing of substantive issues on which voters could make a judgment on the direction of the country (Germond and Witcover, p. 463). Overall there were not many issues. A general playing up of defense and foreign policy issues as well as the tax-deferral proposal, a child-care plan and his call for lowering the capital-gains tax were among the few specifics Bush presented and Dukakis talked occasionally about a few specific domestic issues. But the rest was "a wasteland" (Barnes, "Cheap..."). Transcendent issues of national importance such as the stability of the economy, homelessness, the global trade imbalance and relations with the Soviet Union were crowded out by issues like the flag pledge and prison furloughs (Germond and Witcover, p. 8). In Simon's view, this circumvention of relevant issue dialogue harmed American democracy, resulting in an electorate that "stumbled into election day with issues obscured" (p. 161).

Another successful Atwater/Ailes strategy was to demean Dukakis through false rumor and

ridicule. Atwater was credited for spreading the rumor that Dukakis had emotional problems and had "seen a shrink" (Rosenthal, "The Manipulators"). With the help of a press Atwater knew would now "as likely as not report that a rumor, still unconfirmed, is gripping the political community" Bush gained from the episode: all the voters knew was something hazy about Dukakis and a psychiatrist, which was "enough to hurt" the Democratic candidate (Barnes, "Cheap..." p. 15). One of the most effective ridicule techniques was the "Alfred E. Neuman" episode. After delivering a major speech on U.S./Soviet relations, Dukakis made a "classic mistake of stepping on his own story" by taking a ride, wearing a helmet, in an M-I tank at a General Dynamics plant. The visuals buried his speech on television, where a tape showed Dukakis looking like Alfred E. Neuman in a tank while the sound track "recorded reporters hooting with laughter." Germond and Witcover report Atwater's reaction to the episode:

> I thought it was the biggest bonanza I had seen in the whole campaign. I could immediately think of three analogies that everybody could relate to and laugh their ass off at--Rocky the Squirrel, Beetle Bailey and Alfred E. Neuman. It was a gold mine (p. 406-7).

The Bush team intentionally and effectively used emotional manipulation through carefully constructed media images to control the campaign agenda. Roger Ailes was especially attuned to the fact that "people watch tv emotionally" (cited in Diamond, p. 36) and that although media "tut tutted trash politics" they were "willing accomplices at it." Producing and delivering negative but visually powerful ads focusing on Dukakis's mistakes was a sure way to guarantee a "free hit" because the news primarily was interested in pictures and mistakes. In Ailes words:

> If pretty visuals and harsh words were the only thing the media would publish, screw 'em. Give it to 'em every night (cited in Yepsen, p. I0).

Diamond reports on a particularly popular television marketing innovation : the creation of designer ads, almost always intended to been seen on evening newscasts. The "spot-makers" would hand-deliver the ads which would be "duly shown" as part of the campaign-news coverage--before any commercial time was purchased. In this way, the campaigns earned free network time by presenting in the ostensibly neutral news environment what in truth were political ads. While both Democrats and Republicans used this ethically feeble technique, the Ailes/Atwater team excelled at it with "stealth ads that hardly leave a

radar trace" (p. 37).

Neither did Bush's campaign planners allow him to participate in any free exchanges of ideas unless absolutely unavoidable. His campaign was essentially "all but scripted" (Barnes, "Cheap ...") For example Germond and Witcover recall Bush's refusal to participate in a third debate and note one time when the Republican candidate responded to reporters' requests for specifics on how he would deal with the deficit and the contra questions as president. He made it clear that the last thing he wanted to do was talk:

> Now I'm having trouble with these questions...because they are putting me beyond where I want to be. And so, if I don't answer some of them from here on, it is because I am focusing on November 8 and I don't want to be dragged beyond that because things seem to be going well now (p. 449).

More difficult to document yet still of importance from an ethical viewpoint is the appearance of specious campaign behavior from a "mysterious" group or source that could not be traced. Barnes reports on a 1987 campaign mailing trashing then Republican presidential candidate Jack Kemp as a "phony conservative." Although the mailing was anonymous, attributed only to a "Conservative Truth Squad", there is some evidence that Bush, through Atwater, drafted the attack. If so, this would be not only a very "dirty trick" but also a possible violation of a federal campaign regulation requiring the identity of persons who paid for and authorized such a communication ("Republican...", p. 20).

In Campaign '88, an "attack spot" on the "crime issue", one of the Bush team's major targets, appeared showing side-by-side photos of Bush and Dukakis, with the voice-over: "He allowed first-degree murderers to have weekend passes from prison." The nominal sponsor of the group was called "Americans for Bush." Under federal campaign law, such a group is considered separate from the main campaign because its expenditures are made independently (Diamond, p. 37).

In both cases, the main campaign or at least the image of George Bush remained "technically clean" with no visible link to the very effective but unethical and possibly illegal methods. It is possible that there was no connection as Atwater and Ailes maintain (Barnes, "Republican...) However, the question is an open one and it is also possible that Bush and his handlers represent a trend in American politics with the candidates "hewing to the high road of bipartisan cooperation while party mechanics

like Atwater" take "the low road of partisan guttersniping" (Morganthau, p. 33).

One final observation remains regarding the ethical framework suggested by the behavior of the Bush campaign staff. The Republican candidate seemed to have no problem with the battle-plans of his team. If Roger Ailes "was the handler's handler" (Yepsen, p. I) then Bush was the handler's candidate, willing to do whatever Ailes and Atwater suggested (Germond and Witcover, p. 402). Andersen observes that a strong test of a candidate is whether he or she tolerates, endorses, or condemns particular actions (p. 488). Germond and Witcover question whether the ethical persona of George Bush is reflected at least partially in his choice of Ailes and Atwater as handlers and his subsequent acquiescence to their schemes:

> Another irony in this 'year of the character issue' was the fact that very little was said or written about the character of a candidate who gave his hired guns a free hand to plot and implement a no-holds barred campaign of negativism and distortion against his opponent--and then acquiesced in being the personal implementer of that campaign on the stump (p. 463-4).

Simon expands on this concern when he observes the real danger of relying on undemocratic methods to get elected in a democracy is that someone who abuses the process to win a public office may well abuse the same process while in office (p. 154).

Discussion

McDonald reports that while both Bush and Dukakis lost voter respect as a result of Campaign '88, a more significant effect was the loss of respect of American voters for the democratic process (p. 30). About as many Americans eligible to participate in the democratic process through voting turned their backs on that process on Election Day I988 when less than fifty percent of the American electorate went to the polls, the lowest level of voter participation since I924 (Germond and Witcover, p. xvi). While a discussion of democratic theory is beyond the scope of this essay, some reflections on participatory democracy might be useful at this point.

Pateman in Participation and Democratic Theory offers summary ideas regarding the idea of the rule of the people by means of maximum participation. Although this notion may be an ideal, some

question the place of participation in a modern, viable theory of democracy, assigning to it only a minimal role. Voter participation may be seen not only as "hopelessly unrealistic" but even as a threat to a democracy in that increased political involvement by an ill-informed, short-sighted and disorganized public could upset the stability of a democratic system (pp. 2-3).

While these criticisms may be well-founded, they are not reason enough to discard the concept if there is a genuine interest in and support for democracy being "rule by the people." In Verba and Nie's view, the question of **who** participates in political decisions becomes the question of the nature of democracy in a society. When few take part in decisions there is little democracy; when many participate, there is much democracy. While acknowledging the crudeness of such a definition, because it says little about elections, or free speech, or minority rights, or majority rule, it "may get to the heart of the matter, since all other institutions associated with democracy can be related to the general question of who participates or is able to participate in political life" (p. I).

In the United States, participatory mechanisms may be inadequate because citizens may not have the skill to "calculate the consequences of their acts" and so "damage their own best (but unrecognized) interests by short range and ill-conceived demands" and because the average citizen is not active enough (Verba and Nie, pp. 4-5).

However, participation itself may begin to address these concerns. Not only does citizen involvement in government communicate citizen needs to that government but it is, in itself, a source of satisfaction with both the government and one's own role. In this sense, participation is an educational device through which civic virtues are acquired; through participation the citizen in a democracy learns the responsibility to participate in the system (Verba and Nie, pp. 4-5).

Pateman refers to Rousseau and John Stuart Mill as two examples of classical democratic theorists whose legacies resulted in the notion of participatory democracy as a system designed to develop responsible, individual social and political action through the effect of the participatory process. As a result of participating in decision making the individual learns to distinguish between personal impulses, learns to be "a public as well as a private citizen." Furthermore, once this participatory system is in place, it becomes self-sustaining because the very qualities that are required of individual citizens if the system is to work successful are those that the process of participation itself develops and fosters;

the more the individual citizens participate the better able they are to do so. In Pateman's view, this is more than enough justification for advocating a participatory system in a democracy (pp. 24-5).

It is this view of democracy as a means of continuing individual and societal evolution that Haiman addresses when he states "one of the tenets upon which a democratic society is built" is " the principle that the end does not justify the means" (p. 387), to which Day refers when he says "democracy is a commitment to means, not ends" (p. 7) and about which Nilsen comments:

> In a democratic society the method of decision is vital. How we go about making up our minds is vital. Whether we vote for a particular candidate in a particular election may not be momentous for democracy, but how we make up our minds about candidates is indeed momentous. By constantly limiting the critical faculties in decision we are limiting the basis upon which it is possible to have a responsible citizenry, and thus we weaken the very foundations of democracy ("Free Speech...", pp. 242-3).

In 1970 Pateman observed that current theory considered participation of the minority elite and non-participation of the apathetic, ordinary person lacking in a sense of political efficacy to be the main bulwark against instability in a modern democracy. The result of such thinking was a theory

> that in many respects bears a strange resemblance to the anti-democratic argument of the last century. No longer is democratic theory centered on the participation of 'the people'...or the prime virtue of democratic political system seen as the development of politically relevant and necessary qualities to the ordinary individual (p. 104).

The 1988 presidential campaign may be the legacy of this theory and a paradigm case making concrete the fears of Nilsen and others about what becomes of a democratic system that no longer espouses democratic means.

One conclusion about the unethical strategies so often resorted to in the 1988 campaign is that those planning and executing them seemed "totally insensitive" to the realities of what is necessary for a free system to function (Simon, p. 154). Missing in the world view of the campaign handlers, if not the candidates, may have been the knowledge that in political life, one acts not only as a private person but as a public person as well. Novak contends

> In some respects, the social morality of the community is more demanding than private

> morality.... Political morality is not the same as personal morality. It consists, in the United States, of working within the traditions of private liberties and public morality imperfectly but painstakingly established by the generation that have preceded us. It consists, also, in trying to enlarge those traditions, to deepen them, to extend them (p. 278-82).

Viewed from this perspective, it is not surprising Campaign '88 turned up lacking when examined according to ethical standards for public behavior in a participatory democracy. Not only was the campaign enacted in a context where democratic methods may very well not have been considered necessary but, more importantly, the major players represented by the Atwater/Ailes/Bush triad may have had little if any conception or appreciation of the difference between ethical public as opposed to ethical private behavior. If there is no tradition of participation in a democracy to serve as evidence of the value of that participation, then respect for and practice of such a behavior diminishes. Accordingly, so does consideration for adhering to any standards that would safeguard such a method.

With attitudes such as "I follow the Nathan Bedford Forrest formula--get there firstest with the mostest" (cited in Walsh, p. 34) Atwater personifies the ignorant and/or negligent politician/handler embracing non-democratic methods:

> Atwater, I'm sure, knows the classic difference between right and wrong. He just doesn't think they're relevant to what he does. What counts is not how you play the game; it's whether you win or lose (Reeves, B2).

A sense of a public responsibility to democracy as both a pattern of procedures as well as a pattern of values, an appreciation for the ways in which democracy can undermine itself in the name of democracy (Nilsen, "Free Speech...", p. 235-6) and the realization that because people can be moved does not mean that they should be so moved (Haiman,p. 288) are some of the notions about which campaign teams including managers, media experts and candidates need to be educated. In Nilsen's words

> The values must influence the procedures, and the procedures must continuously recreate the values, if democracy is to perpetuate itself ("Free Speech..." p. 236).

Finally, the role of the citizen, of the voter in campaign '88 should be considered. The electorate in a democracy also has an ethical yardstick against which to measure its behavior: degree of

involvement. Roughly half of eligible American voters chose not to become involved in the presidential campaign through voting or criticizing some of the methods involved. Some observers note that a citizen's choosing not to participate may be comparable if not worse to the damage inflicted on democracy by unethical campaign techniques. Rosenthal suggests Americans "manipulate ourselves" during political campaigns by showing "no outrage" at being treated "like nincompoops every single day" ("The Manipulators"). In McDonald's view, negativity will continue to characterize election campaigning until voters penalize people who use it (p. 32) and Simon contends the while public dialogue is essential in a free country "the public must demand it" (p. 67). Germond and Witcover argue that presidential elections ultimately come down to the voters and to their willingness to separate fact from fiction and to cast their ballots, the "single most important political act most of them are called upon to perform", based on rational judgment (p. xvi). Finally, Haiman articulates the ethical responsibility of a citizen in a democracy:

> We must now look to the ethical responsibility of the audience. They too have an obligation to aid in the preservation of human dignity--first and foremost their own! It is easy enough to score others for practicing manipulation, but those who succumb to it under little or no pressure are even more to be questioned. In fact it would seem that the ultimate solution to the problem of hidden persuasion lies not in attempting to outlaw the manipulator...but in teaching listeners to become more sensitive to the techniques of psychological manipulation so that they can protect themselves at least from those that are not completely subliminal (p. 392).

Conclusion

This essay has examined some of the campaign communication behavior during the 1988 presidential race in terms of ethical criteria for a participatory democracy. Overall, the campaign violated several standards for ethical campaigns through strategies such as over- reliance on emotional appeals, a short circuiting of the electorate's reasoning capacities through techniques such as ridicule and failure to concentrate on issues relevant to a national political race, manipulation of media messages and a reluctance to openly discuss ideas. In short, predominately non-democratic means were used to

achieve allegedly democratic ends.

It should be again noted that the Atwater/Ailes/Bush team was examined as a paradigm case and that the conclusions of this study are probably systemically relevant, applicable to Democrats and Republicans alike. For example, Dukakis has used unethical tactics. Some have argued that "Bush holds no monopoly on taking liberties with his opponent's record" (McDonald, p. 32); an on-going debate between Michael Dukakis and his once fired-then re-hired chief strategist John Sasso occurred over the issue of Dukakis striking back and harshly counter-attacking Bush and it may be that whatever success Dukakis did have was gained by "stealing a page from Bush's strategy book" (Germond and Witcover, p. 455). Furthermore, the Democratic candidate was labelled a "not ready for prime time player" and criticized for his failure to run a "decent" campaign, not in terms of ethical standards, but in terms of being able to put together a campaign comparable to Bush's (Yepsen, p. l0).

In conclusion neither praise or blame is assigned candidates, media consultants, managers or electorate for the apparent dearth of campaign communication techniques and behaviors necessary to create and perpetuate a participatory democracy. Rather, two broad observations are offered.

First, Haiman notes that one does not choose freely if unaware of what one is doing (p.388). It follows that in order for choice to fully function in a democracy, both the rationale as well as the means for that choice must be clear. If participatory democracy is the goal of American politics, then the results of this study suggest the current system must change to better accommodate the means for achieving that end. Either campaign candidates or the electorate and preferably both must educate themselves about not only what choices are available but more importantly what communciation behaviors create and perpetuate such a system. Then the political candidates/staffs must encourage such behavior and the electorate must engage in such behavior.

Finally, contrary to what seems unlikely moving into the twenty-first century, Americans may still have a modern, viable theory of democracy which retains the notion of participation at its heart. The channels and media may change. The role of the media consultant may become more prominent. The size of the electorate and the scope of the issues may expand. However the basic arguments of Rousseau and Mills still apply: we do learn to participate and from that behavior emerges a feeling of political efficacy which in turn facilitates and sustains a more vigorous democracy. And, as in Quintilian's

day, the basic ethical attribute for such a society is still "good" women and men willing to learn how to "speak" well that they may better speak out.

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